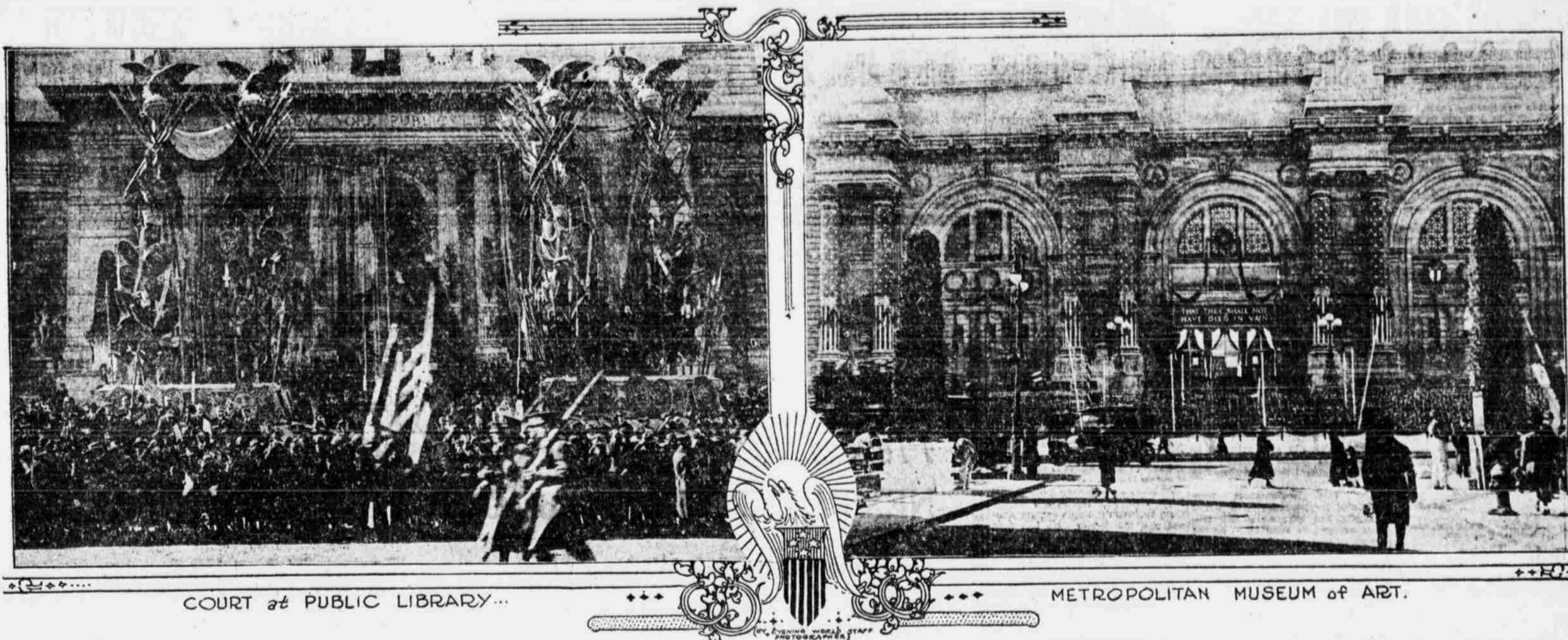


BRILLIANT DECORATIONS AT PRINCIPAL POINTS IN THE LINE



GEN. O'RYAN TELLS OF PRIDE IN THE BRAVE BOYS HE LED AS COMMANDER OF THE 27TH

Veteran Officers "Spotted" Division's New York City Boys by Their Trimness.

ARE BEST OF SOLDIERS.

General Gives High Praise to Actor-Entertainers of the Division.

By Martin Green.

It Major Gen. John P. O'Ryan had not decided to take up a military career he would have been a leader in any profession requiring a basic qualification the talent for observation. He would have been a wonderful reporter, a superior detective, a superlative investigator; and in addition to his powers of observation, he possesses to a marked degree the gift of expression. He is always interesting, as a writer or a talker, and it is probable that he has stored up more information about a wider range of subjects in military matters than anybody else in the army.

Officers attached to the War Department told this writer recently that Gen. O'Ryan's reports, made as a result of a visit to the British front in 1917 in advance of his departure for the front with his division, were the most complete in detail, the clearest and the best arranged they ever saw. Nothing of military worth was so small to engage his attention. He supplied to the War Department information about equipment, for instance, that nobody else had even thought about. And the reports were so annotated and indexed that officers interested in any subject, from the heels of soldiers' shoes to the most appropriate tint for the finish of steel helmets, can turn right to the information they seek without reading about other things.

Gen. O'Ryan is prone to confine his conversations to military affairs, although he is thoroughly posted on current events. Sometimes he is persuaded by questions from or statements of others in his company to talk on subjects dissociated from war, but almost any subject has a military end nowdays, and he invariably follows that end into its natural objective. However, there is one line of conversation not completely military—although it has, in a sense, a military aspect—of which the General never tires, and that relates to the "show unit" of his division.

THE VALUE OF THE SHOW UNIT.

This unit includes the actors, singers and dancers who kept their companions amused and entertained throughout the war and are now presenting the superior musical show, "Let's Beat It!" at the Century Theatre.

Gen. O'Ryan has attended every performance given by his soldier-actors, and he was just as good an audience at the last show as at the first. Sometimes he has done a little cornering of the dialogues and jokes.

The General spared time from his multifarious official duties to talk in

a gossip way about his division and other matters yesterday. He didn't know he was going to talk until he started in. Capt. Eddy, his aide, had made an appointment for him to meet the writer.

"Speaking of the show unit," remarked the General's visitor, "just what part does amusement play in the life of a soldier in the field?" "A very important part," said Gen. O'Ryan. "You have noticed perhaps that everywhere presenting figures showing how a man earning so much a week ought to manage to save so much a week, always make an expenditure allowance for 'amusement.' It is considered necessary that the working man, the business man, the housewife, the school children shall be amused. The soldier before he puts on his uniform and subject himself to military discipline has been a working man or business man—although a business man is a working man for that matter—and he carries into military service the same desire for amusement he possessed in civil life.

"But a soldier in the field is unable to pick his own amusements. He is part of a machine which provides everything for him—his clothes, his food, his transportation, his quarters. And as he is unable to seek his amusement it must be brought to him.

"We were particularly fortunate in our division in the way of material for an amusement enterprise. From this city, the headquarters of things theatrical in the United States, we had gathered in a number of professional actors, singers and musicians. They just naturally got together as soon as we got settled down in camp and gave a show. Around the professional nucleus we built up a big organization, and our amateur talent proved to be surprisingly efficient. Of course, as commander of the division I am theoretically manager of the theatrical troupe, and I can say with managerial pride that everyone we have appeared we have 'knocked 'em dead.' You ought to see our notices!"

"Our acting boys were good fighters, too. Our comedians lightened many a dreary hour in the field, but every soldier is more or less of a comedian. He can see something funny in the most serious situation. He jokes going into battle, and it is a good thing. Ask a soldier about his experiences and in a majority of instances he will proceed to relate a happening that made him laugh."

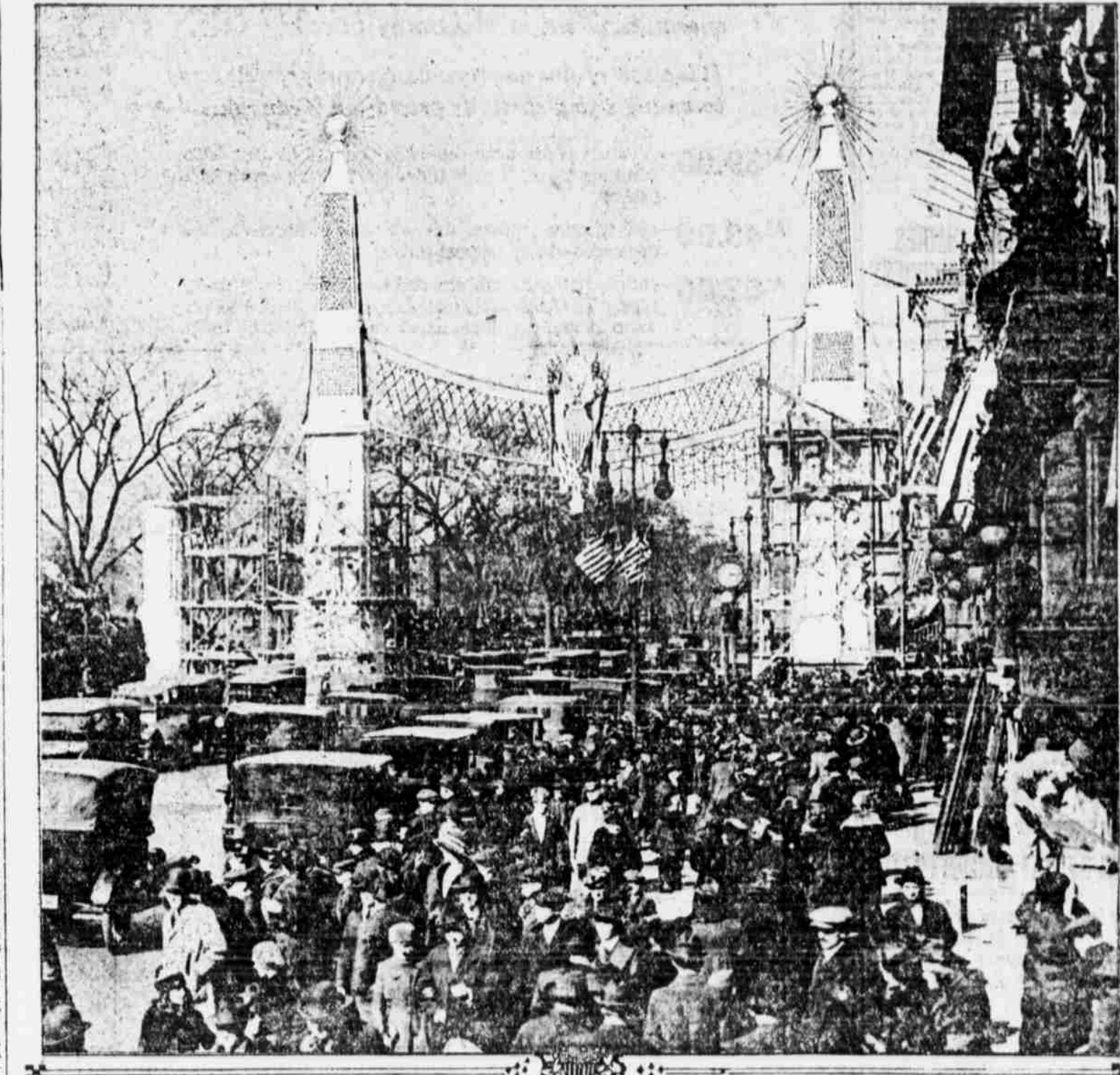
HOW "MINEOLA" BECAME A BATTLE CRY.

"What about this expression 'Mineola' I heard so often on the front?" asked the writer. "Is it a division joke?" "By no means," replied General O'Ryan. "I am told by Col. Franklin Ward that it is the battle cry of the 106th Regiment, adopted under circumstances which might be called extraordinary."

"When the 106th Regiment led the way in the assault on the Hindenburg line the men went into the fight yelling 'Mineola!' It was a surprise to the officers, who made inquiries, and they tell me that from what they learned this yell was a sort of involuntary exclamation which appeared to have a psychological side."

"Upon leaving camp at Spartenburg, bound for France, the division was divided, and the 106th Regiment came to New York for embarkation. In some way the word got around the regiment that it was going into camp at Mineola before starting for the front."

"Of course, this rumor was good news to the boys, most of whom are from Brooklyn. It meant a chance to



ARCH OF JEWELS

By Evening World Staff Photographers

see their folks and, perhaps, to get leave and see Brooklyn and Manhattan. But they didn't get to camp at Mineola and their only glimpse of New York was gained from the transport.

"Their disappointment was keen, but was soon forgotten in the excitement of the voyage and the novelty of the experience of approaching the 'cont' in France. It would certainly seem that the incident was buried by the time the regiment received orders to open the attack on the Hindenburg line."

"Officers tell Col. Ward they do not find that there was any concerted plan to use any kind of a battle cry going over the top. But as the men started in, after a period of tense, eager waiting, the word 'Mineola' seemed to literally burst from them."

"Might it be possible," asked the writer, "that the memory of the old disappointment suddenly came to them in the shock of the charge?" "That," said the General, "is not for me to say. I have to opinion."

EXCLUSIVELY A NEW YORK DIVISION.

The 27th Division, during its fighting career in Picardy, Flanders and Belgium was exclusively a New York division, representative of all parts of the State. No other division furnished

such an opportunity for comparison in warfare between the boy born and reared in a great city and the boy born and reared on a farm or in a small town. Gen. O'Ryan's sense of observation served him in this connection.

"The city bred boy," he said, "is not so excitable under unusual conditions as the country bred boy, although the city bred boy is the more nervously energetic. Even so remarkable a thing as a battle is only an experience to one raised in New York City."

"The country bred boy is better than the city bred boy in many of the tasks which are part of army life. He takes better care of horses and vehicles. In digging and cutting wood, and the general labor at which the soldier spends most of his time the country boy excels because he is used to it. He accomplishes those things easily and with the least drain on his resources. The city boy has to work harder and tires himself out in employment that is strange to him. The mixture of the nervously energetic, quick thinking city boy and the slower thinking more reserved country boy forms an ideal element in a fighting force."

"In our division," the General went on, "we have at this time thousands

of boys from other States who were sent to us to take the place of our killed and wounded. It is a source of great gratification to me to hear on all sides unqualified commendation of the behavior of all the boys of the 27th Division, whether they belong to this city or State or belong elsewhere."

"We have tried to impress on the boys that they should continue to act as soldiers to the finish of their career as soldiers, that they should not let down in discipline or conduct as their discharge day approaches. They have been all over New York for more than two weeks and thus far we have not received a single complaint. I am told by military men and by citizens who have had military training that they can tell a 27th Division soldier long before they make out the insignia on his sleeve by his general air of neatness and his soldierly carriage. No higher praise could be given."

"It is no exaggeration to say that there is practically no food waste in France. The waste is noticeable here on all sides is simply appalling. The returned soldier, by reason of rigorous army training, which compelled him to take personal care of all his own effects and to keep them neat and presentable, will come closer into the family life of his home than he was before he went away."

"While war is wholesale waste, the

people—have fought a foreign foe in a foreign land and lived in a foreign land. They have mingled with the French people, lived in French cities and towns and villages and on farms and they have brought back many ideas which will seem strange to their home folks."

"They have found, for instance, that it is possible to obtain any where in France on short notice a good well-cooked meal. This applies to the peasant's cottage, to the little seaside inn, to the restaurants in general."

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soldier who has lived with the French is going to notice the food and household waste at home and protest against it.

"The soldier from the farm has had indelibly stamped on his mind memories of intensive cultivation of the soil of France and of conservation of French natural resources. These lessons, taken to our farms, should have a great beneficial effect on the farming industry. Our soldiers found from the moment they reached France that lumber is scarce there, and they observe on every hand the careful and wise methods used in caring for French forests. In the production of lumber not a twig is wasted. If a Frenchman decides to get fuel from a wood lot he divides the total number of trees in the lot by seven and trims the limbs from one-seventh of the trees each year for seven years. At the end of the seven-year period the trees which were first trimmed are ready to be trimmed again. If our returning soldiers living in timber districts carry the idea and practice of forest preservation home the war will have been worth while to that extent."

SPITE OF AFTERNOON TEA, TOMMY IS A FINE SOLDIER.

"While on the subject of food and things like that," remarked the General's visitor, "let us know if it is true that the British soldier knocks off nothing at 4 o'clock every afternoon for his cup of tea."

"I wouldn't say that," replied Gen. O'Ryan, "but the afternoon tea habit is in the British Army to an extent that is sometimes exasperating to soldiers who forget all about eating or drinking when there is a job to be done."

"I am told that during some of our hottest fighting the drivers of British lorries bringing up our supplies stopped at a roadside for their afternoon tea. Our German counterparts found them and the conversation, I am informed, was quite lurid. However, if the British soldier's afternoon tea does him any good, by all means let him have it, because he is a smashing good soldier."

"It has been said," ventured the writer, "that the Germans were far superior to the Allies in the planning of their machine gun positions with reference to the possibility of the greatest damage to the enemy."

"In that connection," said Gen. O'Ryan, "it should be remembered that the Germans were on the defensive, fighting on ground they had occupied for years. They had plenty of opportunity to work on machine gun and other defenses, and I will say for them they did their work skillfully and thoroughly, but we learned rapidly, and in machine gun warfare, after we broke out of their prepared stronghold, we excelled."

"The Germans were particularly strong in their machine gun defenses of farms or little villages. I can illustrate this by our experience in taking a village called Herzele. I think which was particularly well fortified. They had machine guns in protected places in the village, but they knew that in the course of events we would finally destroy those positions by artillery fire, which we did. We blew the village to pieces, practically, with our big guns, and then we advanced."

WHEN GERMAN EFFICIENCY PROVED FUTILE.

"There were certain avenues or roads or openings through which this advance had to be made. At some distance beyond the village the Germans had dug trenches for machine guns which were not excelled in point of construction by the trenches in the actual Hindenburg line. The machine guns in these trenches covered, frontally and at angles, every point through which an advance could be made through what was left of the village. The trenches were so well camouflaged that we did not know they were there."

"German machine gunners reared in these trenches in more or less comfort while we were shelling the village. And when we came through they opened up on us. We eventually silenced all these positions with artillery. I passed there a short time later, and the trenches were literally full of dead Germans."

Gen. O'Ryan was right with his men in their hardest fighting, and he saw his regiments come back, shattered and bleeding, but undaunted,

MANY NOTABLES AMONG THE 2,000 IN K. OF C. STAND

Pretty Girls Shower Flowers on Wounded as They Pass the Cathedral.

The Knights of Columbus stand in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral was filled to the last of its 2,000 seats by 9 o'clock. Dr. Harry P. Swift, Chairman of the New York Chapter, and Michael S. Hogan, supervisor of War Activities, were in active charge of a battalion of ushers and of overseas girls distributing flags and programmes, who began their duties at 7 o'clock and kept the people moving into place, swiftly and comfortably.

Among the prominent members of the Knights of Columbus of New York and other cities who occupied the boxes at the ends of the stands were Supreme Knight James A. Flaherty of Philadelphia, Daniel J. Sullivan of Fall River, director for the Eastern-Northeastern Department; William J. McGinley, Supreme Secretary; District Attorney Joseph Pelletier of Boston, Supreme Advocate; William P. Larkin, Overseas Director; Dr. John J. Simont, Chairman of the Domestic War Relief Committee; Edward L. Arnold, Chairman of the City War Relief Work Committee; Eugene P. Clark, Director of Supplies; and Joseph J. Tuomey, Chairman of the Service Station Committee.

The boxes in the centre were occupied by more than 500 clergy. Among them were Vicar General Joseph H. Mooney, Mr. M. J. Lavelle, Mr. John J. Dunn, Mr. Luke J. Evers, Mr. Henry A. Brann and the Rev. John J. Wynne, Chaplain of the New York Chapter.

There were many wounded members of the order on the stands still wearing their olive drab and blue, who were brought to the stand from base hospitals in the city and vicinity.

The pretty girls grouped along the front of the stand were supplied with great stacks of flowers with which they greeted the wounded members of the 27th Division, who were carried through the parade in the big white eight-wheel cars provided by the order. An enormous sheet of American Beauty roses was reserved for the Rev. Father Francis A. Kelly, Division Chaplain, for whom the stand rose with tremendous uproar as he passed in Major Gen. O'Ryan's staff.

from successful attacks on German positions which had been, a few hours before, deemed impregnable by the foe. In all the warmth of the welcome home, in the midst of the rush of preparation, he has thought of the boys he left in France, and he will think of the missing when cheering hundreds of thousands greet the survivors of the division in the great parade.

"I am proud of those who came home," said the General. "I am proud of those who made the great sacrifice, and I feel for their families and their friends. It is my sincere hope that the people of New York will never forget the families of the boys who died and will do everything possible for the comfort and support of those who came back crippled. Those of us who came back whole will be able to take care of ourselves."